



U.S. Department of Justice

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PRESS RELEASE

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TWO MEN PLEAD GUILTY IN ATTEMPTED ROBBERY OF PIZZA SHOP

- Crime Was Captured on Video -

WASHINGTON - Nathaniel Byrd, 19, and Ronald Williams, 18, both of Washington, D.C., have pled guilty in connection with the recent attempted armed robbery of a pizza shop, U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr. announced.

Byrd and Williams pled guilty on December 16, 2010 in the Superior Court of the District of Columbia to one count each of assault with intent to rob while armed. The defendants face a maximum term of 30 years in prison. However, under the District of Columbia's Voluntary Sentencing Guidelines, they will likely receive a sentence of between three years and seven years. They are to be sentenced before the Honorable Judge Ronna L. Beck on February 28, 2011.

At the plea hearing, Byrd and Williams acknowledged that on November 23, 2010, at approximately 5:30 p.m., they entered the Papa John's store in the 900 block of 11th Street SE, Washington, DC. A video captured the incident.

According to the government's evidence, both men pointed guns at the employee behind the cash register. Williams told the employee to "give it up." The employee responded that he was only a driver. Williams then ordered the employee to open the register. The employee responded that he could not do so and turned his pant pockets inside out to show that he did not have any money. Byrd and Williams then left the store without any money.

Two other employees left the store and notified police officers who were on routine patrol. A police officer noticed Byrd and Williams at 11th and I Streets SE. As the officer approached, they both fled. Byrd was eventually stopped in the 700 block of 12th Street SE. Officers recovered a loaded .40 caliber Smith and Wesson handgun from his right waistband. An employee identified Byrd as one of the persons who entered the store with a handgun. Byrd's clothing matched the clothing of one of the people seen on the store video pointing a gun.

As an officer chased Williams, he noticed a gun in the 700 block of 11th Street SE; the weapon turned out to be a loaded 9 mm Glock. The officer stayed by the handgun. A K-9 unit, meanwhile, located Williams hiding in the rear of a building in the 700 block of 12th Street SE. A black hoodie was found in a dumpster near Williams, and a black mask also was found nearby. Williams's clothing, along with the hoodie and mask, matched the clothing of the other person in the video pointing a handgun.

In addition, a Papa John's employee identified Williams' clothing as the clothing worn by the other person pointing a gun.

In announcing the guilty pleas, U.S. Attorney Machen praised the outstanding investigative work of Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) Detectives Chanel Howard and Raymond Stargel; MPD officers Willie Harris, Don Marshall, Joshua Martinez, Emmanuel Smith, Charles Viggiani, and Kevin Wagner; Evidence Technician Stanley Rembish, and District of Columbia Housing Authority Officer Sonya Cobbs. U.S. Attorney Machen also commended the work of Assistant U.S. Attorney Anthony Saler, who handled the case.

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